

**2343**

## **FCAB UPDATE**

***Week of June 21, 1999***

(Last Briefing was Dated May 31, 1999)

### **MEETINGS**

**FERNALD MONTHLY PROGRESS BRIEFING** Services Building Conference Room  
Tuesday, July 13, 6:30 p.m.

**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE** Large Laboratory Conference Room  
Wednesday, July 14, 1999, 6:30 p.m.

**REMEDIATION COMMITTEE** Large Laboratory Conference Room  
Thursday, July 15, 1999, 6:30 p.m.

**FULL BOARD MEETING** Large Laboratory Conference Room  
Saturday, July 17, 1999, 8:30 a.m.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Approved Minutes from the 3/13/99 full board meeting
- 4/21/99 Remediation Committee Meeting Summary
- 5/12/99 Remediation Committee Meeting Summary
- 5/19/99 Stewardship Committee Meeting Summary
- 1999 Calendar Second Half
- The Oak Ridge Reservation *Stakeholder Report on Stewardship*
- Article from the *Evergreen* "Wildlife Management: The Challenge of Success"
- News Clippings

### **NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Two items to pay special attention to this mailing:**

- The Oak Ridge Reservation *Stakeholder Report on Stewardship* is the first stakeholder-led effort to analyze stewardship requirements for sites after remediation is complete. Provides a good overview of issues that we will begin to look at in the Stewardship committee in the coming months.
- Article from the *Evergreen* "Wildlife Management: The Challenge of Success"  
This article appeared in a recent local paper and identifies some of the challenges that are being faced by a growing deer and geese population. These issues will be important to the overall planning for the future of Fernald.

### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Please contact Doug Sarno or Gwen Doddy, Phoenix Environmental  
Phone: 513-648-6478 or 703-971-0058 Fax: 513-648-3629 or 703-971-0006  
E-Mail: PhnxEnvir@aol.com or DJSarno@aol.com

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## Minutes from the March 13, 1999 Meeting

The Fernald Citizens Advisory Board met from 8:30 a.m. until 11:50 a.m. on Saturday, March 13, 1999, at the Large Laboratory Conference Room on the Fernald site. The meeting was advertised in local papers and was open to the public.

*Chair*  
James C. Bierer

*Vice Chair*  
Thomas E. Wagner

*Members*  
Sandy Butterfield  
Marvin W. Clawson  
Lisa Crawford  
Louis Doll  
Pamela Dunn  
Jane Harper  
Darryl D. Huff  
Michael Keyes  
Kenneth A. Moore  
Robert G. Tabor  
Fawn Thompson  
Gene E. Willeke

*Ex Officio*  
L. French Bell  
Jack Craig  
Gene Jablonowski  
Graham Mitchell

*Staff Support*  
Phoenix Environmental  
Douglas J. Sarno  
Crystal M. Sarno  
Gwen Doddy  
703-971-0030  
703-971-0006 Fax  
PhnxEnvir@aol.com

### Members Present

French Bell  
Jim Bierer  
Sandy Butterfield  
Marvin Clawson  
Jack Craig  
Lisa Crawford  
Pam Dunn  
Jane Harper  
Darryl Huff  
Gene Jablonowski  
Mike Keyes  
Lou Doll  
Ken Moore  
Graham Mitchell  
Robert Tabor  
Fawn Thompson  
Thomas Wagner

### Members Absent

Gene Willeke (excused)

### Designated Federal Official

Gary Stegner

### Phoenix Environmental Staff

Douglas Sarno  
Gwen Doddy

### FDF Staff

Tisha Patton  
Sue Walpole  
Jeff Wagner

Approximately 11 spectators also attended the meeting, including members of the public and representatives from DOE and Fluor Daniel Fernald.

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**1. Call to Order**

Chair Jim Bierer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

**2. Announcements and New Business**

Jim Bierer introduced Lou Doll as new member of the Board, who will replace Dan McElroy. Lou Doll has been a member of the Fernald work force since 1983 and he serves on Community Reuse Organization (CRO) and the Fernald Health Effects Subcommittee. Lisa Crawford motioned to have Lou accepted as a member and Bob Tabor seconded the motion.

Bierer announced the resignation of Ray Wurzelbacher from the CAB. The Steering Committee will meet to find a replacement.

Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) Chairs met in Augusta, Georgia, in February. One of the main focuses of the meeting was the Transportation Workshop. The SSAB representatives gave their comments and opinions about the workshop. Based on those recommendations, the FCAB made revisions to their agenda. Secretary Bill Richardson's letter in support of the opening of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) was read at the meeting. Public comment period for the WIPP permit ended in January, public hearings will conclude this month and the permit should be issued in either June or July.

Oak Ridge's Stewardship Committee presented their final report on stewardship. Because of their work on the subject, Oak Ridge volunteered to host a SSAB workshop on stewardship in the fall. Bierer has sent a letter to Bill Pardue, their Chair, in support of the workshop.

Bierer opened the floor to comments from DOE, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), U.S. EPA, and Ohio EPA. French Bell distributed a summary of an ATSDR progress report. Bell will give the full report to anyone who wants it. Bell did place a copy of the full report in the Fernald reading room.

**3. Site Progress and Issues:**

- Leachate Piping Leaks
- First Waste Load-out
- Waste Shipping Resumption
- Safe Shutdown Completion

Jack Craig updated the Board on site progress. Secretary Bill Richardson is coming to the site to celebrate the completion of safe shutdown. Waste shipment should restart in mid-April, DOE Fernald is waiting for DOE Headquarters permission to restart.

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Dennis Carr updated the Board on the first waste load-out of the waste pits project, which occurred in February. The first phase consists of lesser-contaminated materials, which are currently stock-piled. Shipments of stock-piled material should begin in April. Shipment for materials from Pit #3 should begin in June, when the dryers are operational to begin dealing with higher moisture content materials.

Lisa Crawford asked if the concerns over the railroad crossings have been addressed. Due to the merging of the companies CXS and Conrail, Carr stated there might another rail route; thereby, eliminating the concern over some of the local routing. Sarno asked if another meeting with the stakeholders from Hamilton County could be arranged to inform them about the rail routes. Carr agreed.

Carr updated the CAB about Leachate Piping Leaks. The leachate pipes comprised of a double pipe, a six-inch pipe inside a ten-inch pipe. Pieces of each pipe are fused together at the joints either by electro-fusion or welding to make a seamless pipe. Manholes are used to monitor the pipes. A monitor crew discovered a leak at manhole #3. From a series of tests, the crew discovered four leaks in the pipes: two leaks in the inner pipe and two leaks on the outer pipe. Until the leaks are repaired, the water will be trucked from the point of the leak to the lagoon. A team is investigating the leaks and their report should be complete by next week. As a result of the leaks, inspections of the manholes will increase and pipe joints will be electro-fused and welded, to insure a tight seal.

Bierer asked how much liquid leaked out of the system. Carr replied due to the double piping and the slight cracks in the pipe, no liquid leaked out of the system.

#### **4. Transportation Workshop Update**

Sarno updated the CAB about the Transportation Workshop, which will be held May 20-23<sup>rd</sup> at the Vernon Manor. Registration packets were distributed at the SSAB Chairs meeting. Each SSAB will be limited to ten people, five board members and five non-members is suggested. Sarno is working with the other SSABs to inform participants of the expectations. At the Chairs meeting, they decided to create recommendations based upon discussion at the workshop. All attendees, who agree with the statements, will sign these recommendations. Sarno will develop templates for the fact sheets to assist the other SSABs in creating their own fact sheets. These fact sheets will be distributed to attendees at the workshop as a reference.

Sarno asked how many members thought they would attend the workshop. He emphasized the importance of attending the entire workshop and the members need to register for the events. Approximately ten members said they were interested in attending the entire workshop.

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**5. Nye County Request for Support**

- Remediation Committee Letter
- Full Board Action

In February, representatives from Nye County, Nevada, visited the site and expressed concerns about their ability to respond to an emergency involving the shipments to Nevada Test Site (NTS). The representatives requested equipment to assist them with their emergency response. The Remediation Committee drafted a letter in support of the Nye County request for equipment. Sarno drafted a recommendation from the full board, also in support of the Nye County request.

The CAB reviewed Recommendation #99-1, supporting the Nye County request for equipment. After a discussion, minor changes were made to the recommendation. Tom Wagner motioned to accept it, and Ken Moore seconded. The recommendation passed by a majority vote (one person did object to the recommendation).

**6. Future of Fernald Workshop Planning**

Ken Moore, Marvin Clawson, and Doug Sarno attended the Natural Resource Working Group Meeting on Thursday. The settlement of the OEPA lawsuit against DOE determined there will be natural resource restoration; however, it did not determine the public's access to the site. The Natural Resource Working Group is attempting to determine the public access to the site. At the meeting on Thursday, the attendees developed a plan to have a bike/walking trail around the site, which may be connected to the Miami White Water. There could be smaller self-guided loop trails focusing on different topics, such as the Cold War or Native Americans.

**7. Nuclear Materials Disposition Recommendation**

- Overview of Environmental Assessment (EA)
- Comments on EA
- Recommendation on Funding

Sarno gave an overview of the EA to the board. Four site options are available for the nuclear materials. The site identified will serve as interim storage until a commercial vendor is identified. The DOE expects to find a buyer in the next ten years.

The CAB reviewed Recommendation #99-3, commenting on the Environmental Assessment of Oak Ridge Operation's receipt and storage of uranium materials from Fernald. The recommendation focuses on the importance of removing the material from Fernald and safely transferring it to a site where stakeholders have been involved in the process.

After a discussion, it was decided that the recommendation will be re-worded to emphasize that nuclear materials must be removed from the Fernald site in order to

finish remediation. Before sending them, Bierer and Wagner was desingated to approve the final wording of the recommendations. Ken Moore motioned to approve the recommendation, and Bob Tabor seconded the motion. The recommendation was approved.

Next, the Board reviewed recommendation #99-2, which requests addition funds from Congress and DOE for the disposition of nuclear materials. With some changes, the recommendation was approved. Crawford motioned to approve the recommendation and Tabor seconded.

### **8. Silos Proof of Principle and Radon**

Because of snow, Nina Akgunduz's briefing, scheduled for the Tuesday public meeting, was canceled. She gave a condensed presentation based upon the briefing on the silos 1 and 2 proof of principle program and radon. In February, FDF reviewed the primary draft of the cost analysis for the proof of principle. The parameters that were evaluated were:

- disposal volumes
- process control
- ability to meet waste acceptance criteria
- scale-up
- secondary wastes
- off gas
- shipping packaging requirements.

US EPA and Ohio EPA were present for the proof of principle. Four processes were evaluated. Each of these processes has positive and negative aspects.

It was asked if all the bidders had experience handling nuclear material. Akgunduz answered yes, part of the requirements for the bid was previous experience in handling nuclear materials.

Foster Wheeler and their teaming partners (COGEMA, Grey Pilgrim, Oceaneering, Battelle, XL Associates) were awarded the contract for waste retrieval from silos 1 and 2. Foster Wheeler created a mockup retrieval system, which enabled the workers to have training drills.

### **9. Acceptance of Resignations**

After Akgunduz finished, Bierer asked for a motion to accept the resignation of Ray Wurzelbacher and Dan McElroy. Tabor motioned to accept and Lisa seconded the motion.

Bierer reminded everyone that the next meeting of the Board will be in July and a revised FCAB schedule is in the packet of information.

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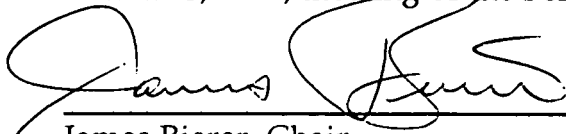
**10. Public Comment**

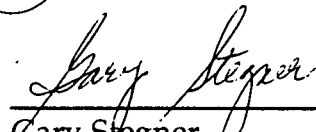
Bierer opened the floor to public comment.  
There was no public comment.

**11. Adjournment**

Jim Bierer adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

I certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the  
March 13, 1999, meeting of the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board.

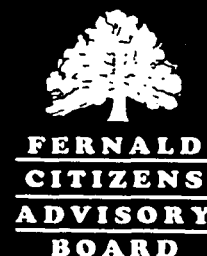
 6/10/99  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James Bierer, Chair  
Fernald Citizens Advisory Board  
Date

 6/10/99  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Stegner  
Designated Federal Official  
Date

## Topics

- Status of Recommendations from March
- Planning for the Transportation Workshop
- Leachate Piping Leaks

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## Attendees

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Bob Tabor  
Gene Willeke  
Tom Wagner  
Jim Bierer  
Sandy Butterfield  
Lisa Crawford  
Fawn Thompson

Fluor Daniel Fernald

Dennis Carr  
Mike Hickey  
Tisha Patton

GeoSyntec

Rudy Bonaparte

Ohio Environmental Projection Agency

Tom Ontko

Phoenix Environmental

Gwen Doddy  
Doug Sarno

U.S Department of Energy

Johnny Reising

## Opening Remarks

Gene Willeke gave a brief background on the leaks in the leachate piping system. He believes the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board (FCAB) should not focus on the legal aspects of the leaks; instead, they should focus on quality control issues associated with the leaks. Doug Sarno added that the concerns that have been presented by FCAB members about the leaks are very similar to the concerns expressed by the FCAB with regard to the leaking white metal boxes incident.

## Status of Recommendations from March

The FCAB has not yet received responses from the Department of Energy (DOE) or the Ohio Congressional Delegation on its earlier recommendations and needs to develop a procedure to follow-up on recommendations.

Tom Wagner suggested a different approach for the recommendations: ask the recommendation's recipient to respond in writing with the amount of time needed to adequately respond to the recommendation. If the time requested has passed without a response, the FCAB should send a follow-up recommendation. Gene Willeke suggested sending a letter to Martha Crosland asking for her help and listing the outstanding recommendations. Lisa Crawford added that someone from the FCAB should meet with Martha Crosland in order to develop a procedure.

With regard to the Nye County, Nevada, Recommendation number 99-1, Willeke suggested sending a memo to Jack Craig asking for closure on this issue. Jim Bierer added that the FCAB should ask a representative from Nye County if the equipment that was sent was satisfactory.

## Transportation Workshop

Sarno told the committee that the notebooks for the Transportation Workshop would not be available prior to the workshop due to delays getting final data approval from the DOE. Next week, Sarno will have a meeting with people from the National Transportation Program to gather more data and resources for the transportation fact sheets.

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The tentative agenda for the Transportation Workshop is:

- Reception on Thursday night.
- Tour of the Fernald site on Friday morning.
- Plenary starting at 1:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon.
- A "skit" about transportation issues on Friday afternoon.

Sarno and Wagner are preparing a presentation for Wagner's introduction to the Workshop. Sarno asked the Committee if they would like DOE to say a few words. Wagner suggested DOE should not give a presentation, but should attend to answer any questions.

Crawford asked how many people were allowed to come from each SSAB and the FCAB. Sarno answered, the SSABs can have up to ten people attend, but the FCAB would not be limited to ten people since we are hosting and have additional duties. Those FCAB members who attend need to participate fully in the workshop.

A memo with final logistics, from Wagner, will be sent to all Transportation Workshop's registrants.

### Leachate Piping Leaks

Dennis Carr, Rudy Bonaparte, and Johnny Reising spoke to the committee about the leaks in the leachate pipes. Carr stated two investigative teams were formed to investigate the four leaks in the system. The investigative teams wrote and issued two reports to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Fluor Daniel Fernald (FDF) wrote a summary of the report. In addition to the FDF report, GeoSyntec wrote a report explaining the structural details of the leachate system.

Willeke was concerned that the leachate piping leaks represented similar quality control and management problems to the white metal box incident. Willeke asked Carr if this was a systematic problem. Wagner asked why the pipe thickness was changed from the original proposal. Carr responded the thinner pipe was less expensive and did not effect the coupling. Bonaparte answered the committees concerns about the change in pipe size from a thicker to a thinner pipe and about the deformation of the pipe. Bonaparte stated the pipes are flexible and the oblong appearance does not impact the system. The electro-fusion coupling process failed on several levels; none are related to the thickness of the pipe. First, the installer cleaned the pipes to prepare the ends, but the manufacturer suggested scraping the pipe to prepare the ends for welding. Second, the crews were working from both ends of the leachate system to the center. Once they reached the center, the pipes had to be electro-fused without the crew being able to see the six-inch pipe. Diagnostic tests showed the pipes were functioning properly; however, these tests could not diagnosis a misalignment. The pipes were not properly aligned and that is what caused some of the leaks.

In retrospect, Carr wished all welds had been inspected before installation. Unfortunately, the quality assurance people were concentrating on the overall cell construction rather than the welding of pipes for the leachate system.

Willeke emphasized the committee's dwindling confidence in the ability of the quality control people. What will happen when the system is permanent?

Sarno added that right now, the site has the community's confidence; however, if mistakes on the level of quality control keep occurring, the community may lose confidence. It was suggested that FDF subcontractors need to have sensitivity training; maybe viewing a tape of the neighbors' concerns will help the workers understand this is not an average "plumbing" job. The FCAB offered assistance to FDF in changing the quality control system, if that is necessary.

Willeke suggested the full Board should meet on June 10, 1999, to discuss the leachate pipe leaks and a follow-up on the Transportation Workshop.

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## Topics

- Cattle Grazing
- Rail Route Changes
- Shipping Suspension
- Risk Summary Report
- Transportation Workshop

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## Attendees

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Sandy Butterfield  
Lisa Crawford  
Tom Wagner  
Gene Willeke

Fluor Daniel Fernald

Tisha Patton

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

Kelly Kaletsky

Phoenix Environmental

Doug Sarno

## Cattle Grazing

Doug Sarno explained to the committee the issue of Karl Summe's grazing his cattle on the Fernald Site. Summe is still grazing his cattle on most of the western portion of the site. The Fernald Citizens Advisory Board (FCAB) did recommend, in 1995, to phase out the grazing of cattle from the site. The Department of Energy (DOE) has proposed that Summe remove his cows from:

- the northern wood lot (Area 8 Phase II, Area I Phase III) by October 1999
- the southern area west of Paddys Run (Area 8 Phase III south) by October 2001
- the northern area west of Paddys Run (Area 8 Phase III north) by October 2003

Sarno asked the committee if this is an issue for the Stewardship Committee, the full board, or the Remediation Committee. Because, this committee did not have all the proposal's details, they decided to have the Stewardship Committee hear DOE's presentation at its next meeting.

## Risk Summary Report

The Center for Risk Excellence wrote a National Risk Report, which summarizes the major risks of each DOE site and how those risks will be decreased over time. Jim Owendoff would like the SSABs to comment on the report by June 4, 1999. After a discussion on the importance of the report, the Committee decided to send their comments to Sarno by May 26, 1999. Sarno will draft a letter to Owendoff with their comments.

## Rail Routes

Due to the CXS and Conrail merger, the rail route from the Fernald site to Envirocare will no longer pass through Cincinnati; instead, the trains will go north to Cottage Grove and then directly west. This is beneficial to the Fernald site because they no longer need to be concerned about shipments doubling back through Cincinnati.

## Transportation Workshop

Sarno walked through the Transportation Workshop's tentative agenda with the Committee. On Thursday night, Fluor Daniel Fernald will host a reception. On Friday afternoon, the plenary session will begin. Wagner will give a presentation on the background of the workshop; explaining the reason for it and the FCAB's involvement with transportation issues. Sarno will present the logistics and the assumptions of the workshop. Each SSAB will introduce the people they brought with them and state their most important transportation issue. On Saturday morning, the core topics will be discussed in the plenary session. Then, the breakout groups will meet to discuss the core topics and draft statements. Those statements will be discussed in site-specific groups. From discussions in the plenary session, site-specific groups, and breakout groups, statements will be developed. SSAB members and participants who agree with the statements will sign them.

Sarno discussed the "pre-workshop assignment." The assignment gives the other SSABs a chance to think about transportation issues before coming to the Workshop. The FCAB should be prepared to discuss these questions as well.

Wagner will assign the breakout groups to the individuals who are coming from the FCAB. Crawford and Butterfield will attend the stakeholder involvement and risk communication breakout group; Willeke will attend the routing, mode, and cost breakout group.



**FERNALD  
CITIZENS  
ADVISORY  
BOARD**

## Topics

- Cattle Grazing Issues
- Future of Fernald Workshop

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## Attendees

Fernald Citizens Advisory Board

Jim Bierer  
Pam Dunn  
Ken Moore  
Bob Tabor

Fernald Living History Project

Jim Innis

Fluor Daniel Fernald

Kim Lahman  
Tisha Patton  
Joseph Schomaker  
Eric Woods

FRESH

Carol Schroer  
Edwa Yocum

Ohio Environmental Projection Agency

Donna Bohannon  
Tom Schneider

Phoenix Environmental

Gwen Doddy  
Doug Sarno

Public

Karl Summe

U.S. Department of Energy

Kathi Nickel  
Johnny Reising  
Ed Skintik  
Gary Stegner  
Pete Yerace

## Cattle Grazing Issue

Johnny Reising explained the cattle grazing lease proposal, which is currently under discussion with Karl Summe and the Department of Energy (DOE). Karl Summe proposed to phase out grazing of his cattle on the Fernald Site:

- in the northern wood lot (Area 8 Phase II, Area I Phase III) by October 1999
- in the southern area west of Paddys Run (Area 8 Phase III south) by October 2001
- in the northern area west of Paddys Run (Area 8 Phase III north) by October 2003

The previous lease expired in March of 1998 and no new lease has been signed. The DOE is in the process of reviewing Sume's lease proposal.

Doug Sarno reminded Reising that in 1995 the Fernald Citizens Advisory Board (FCAB) recommended phasing out cattle grazing as soon as existing leases expired. Concern was expressed that the DOE did not keep the FCAB abreast of the situation.

Pete Yerace explained this is not the first time the lease had expired and under all previous leases it was DOE's responsibility to collect the rent money and to renew the contract. After the FCAB's recommendation, DOE only gave Sume one-year leases, which would allow DOE to remove Sume's cattle from the site when necessary for remediation.

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Sarno asked what the impact of the cows is on intermodal transportation and land erosion.

Tom Schneider stated that Ohio University's study found that the cows did increase the soil erosion around Paddys Run, but the cows did not impact intermodal transportation.

Kathi Nickel suggested installing a fence eight feet from either side of Paddys Run, in order to keep the cows from the stream. This will allow the natural succession of a riparian zone in that area, possibly saving DOE from replanting the area.

Some members of the committee were concerned that the cattle grazing would affect the scheduling of the Native American reburials.

Joe Schomaker responded that DOE is meeting with various Tribal nations; however, it will be some years before the reburials could occur. The cattle are not affecting the Native American reburial process at this time.

Reising added that if the land were needed at any time, the lease could be terminated. The cattle grazing was terminated in the southern area of the site, when that land was needed to complete an aspect of restoration.

Pam Dunn thought the full Board should review the cattle grazing issue and develop a recommendation. Sarno invited Sume to the June 10, 1999, board meeting.

#### **Future of Fernald Workshop**

The purpose of the Future of Fernald Workshop was to gain broader public input about public access to the Fernald site following remediation. The committee reviewed the summaries from the four breakout groups to determine which issues the committee might want to address in the coming year.

The majority of people who attended the workshop believed that Native American reburial is a win-win situation for both the Native Americans and the community. The questions raised by the attendees were:

- Where on the site would the reburials take place?
- How much land is needed?
- Who will fund the stewardship of the remains?
- If there is a historical trail, what will its design be?

The committee decided to focus on these questions.

Most of the public is still concerned about public access to the site. Many feel it is not safe to have walking trails near the on-site disposal facility. Moreover, people were concerned about security and the consequences of someone getting hurt while on site. The committee decided to focus on increasing public participation and educating the public about remediation.

Most of the public was unsure what the level of interest was in an educational and/or cultural center. Sarno suggested sending a questionnaire to the community to determine the level of interest in an educational and/or cultural center. Bierer suggested scheduling a meeting with local teachers to determine the needs of the educational community.

Pam Dunn and Doug Sarno will develop a work-plan for the Stewardship Committee, which will incorporate the concerns and questions raised at the Future of Fernald Workshop.





# 1999 CALENDAR

## Second Half as of

### 6/14/99

All FCAB meeting are held in the Large Lab Conference Room at the Fernald site unless otherwise noted.

#### JULY

- 13 DOE Monthly Progress Briefing
- 14 Stewardship Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- 15 Remediation Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- 17 Full CAB Meeting, 8:30 a.m.

AUGUST No Meetings

#### SEPTEMBER

- 14 DOE Monthly Progress Briefing
- 8 Stewardship Committee, 6:30 p.m.**
- 9 Remediation Committee, 6:30 p.m.**
- 11 Full CAB Meeting, 8:30 a.m.**

#### OCTOBER

- 12 DOE Monthly Progress Briefing
- 13 Stewardship Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- 14 Remediation Committee, 6:30 p.m.

#### NOVEMBER

- 3 Stewardship Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- 4 Remediation Committee, 6:30 p.m.
- 6 Full CAB Meeting, 8:30 a.m.
- 9 DOE Monthly Progress Briefing

DECEMBER Committee meetings as needed

**Note: Bold meetings indicate change in date**

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# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESS

*The amazing resurgence of some adaptable species of wildlife is becoming a concern for land managers throughout the country. In Ohio, white-tailed deer and Canada geese are two species experiencing rapid increases in their populations.*

*The following article was reprinted with permission from Cleveland Metroparks' publication, the Emerald Necklace, August 1994.*

## Too Many Deer - A Point Of View

By Robert D. Hinkle, Ph.D.

Chief Naturalist, Cleveland Metroparks

I entered the door of Michigan Natural Resources - the sign read "opinions may alter debates, but biological laws govern the lives of all living things." The phrase has stayed in my mind and has colored my view of peoples' relationship with the land for over 20 years.

I was trained as a wildlife biologist. Courses like habitat management, wildlife population analysis, animal ecology and all the "ologies" taught me respect for the intricacies of wildlife management by understanding wildlife as a component part of a greater whole, an ecosystem, a large complex series of interrelated populations of plants and animals. Population ecology was especially intriguing to me, as much like a finely-tuned watch, one gear of a living system drove another, which in turn, drove a third and on and on, until each living cog was interrelated to every one in greater or lesser ways. The complexity of it all is still so tangled that not all the pathways have been discovered, but we know that systems have evolved together over time, adapting to gradual changes in climate and each other, until they reached a dynamic web of life.



Deer browsing on a golf course.

One of the measures of a species' ability to survive over time is its ability to change its behavior to meet changes in its habitat. Certain wildlife species like otters, eagles, hawks and many Neotropical songbirds have not been able to change rapidly enough as habitats have changed, watercourses have become polluted or drained, and nesting areas have been destroyed. Other creatures are learning to adapt to change quickly, among them the Canada goose, raccoon and white-tailed deer.

There were no deer remaining in Ohio at the turn of the century. The forests of the state were largely gone, and with them went food and shelter for the deer. Reintroduced in the late 1920s in Scioto County, they have exploded in number until they have become the most common large wild mammal in Ohio.

I am from the "Bambi Baby Boomer" generation. We were raised on the Disney classic, and like most of you, wept as a small child when Bambi's mother was shot, defending her fawn. Deer were scarce in our childhood, and the sight of a wild animal more than twice our own size was a thrill unmatched by home runs and ice cream cones. As we have entered our middle age, we have discovered that the deer have changed as well. No longer afraid of humans, adapting to roaming neighborhoods and feeding on expensive shrubbery, they have multiplied at a rate unmatched



While young fawns are gentle creatures, they grow into large deer that can damage vegetation and habitat for other wildlife.

in the history of wildlife on the North American continent. Whether you like deer or not no longer depends on whether you are a hunter or not, but whether you own a home which is being ravaged by too many hungry deer or if you are an apartment or condo dweller, living your life largely free from close interaction with what was once a timid wild animal. Car/deer accidents are not confined to park areas. Busy suburban neighborhoods are surprised to find wandering deer. Research conducted here in the mid 1980s has shown that white-tailed deer may move as much as 50 miles from their birthplace. They move freely from park lands to suburbs, many leaving wild areas permanently and never returning.

There is no "park district deer herd." Deer, like people, are mobile. They travel where they want and little can deter them.

Despite the fact that deer are lovely to see peacefully grazing along roadsides and gleefully leaping in the springtime meadows, there are simply too many deer. Cleveland is not alone in its plight of exploding deer populations. Cities and villages all across the northeastern United States are experiencing the same problems - too many deer in too small an area. Wildflowers are disappearing from park lands, and now the telltale signs of dangerously high overpopulation are beginning to appear. A "browse line" is beginning to show, as forests and shrubby areas are being stripped of all limbs and branches from ground level to a height of four or five feet, as hungry deer eat everything they can reach. Not only are the deer in danger, but the land that they share with all other wildlife is in danger as well, endangered by the simple biological weight of

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### HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

James A.D. Geier  
Robert A. Goering  
Nancy R. Hamant  
Jon Brady, Director

Hamilton County Park District  
10245 Winton Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45231  
(513) 521-7275 Voice/TDD  
[www.hamiltoncountyparks.org](http://www.hamiltoncountyparks.org)

Jim Rahtz and Joy Landry  
Editors, Evergreen

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This magnificent buck was photographed just a few yards from the road's edge in a busy suburban neighborhood. As deer numbers increase beyond the environment's ability to sustain these large mammals, all forms of nature will suffer. Deer eat away plants that other wildlife depend on for food and shelter. As a result, those animals that prey upon the smaller species will also be adversely affected. As stewards of the land, it is our responsibility to find viable solutions to preserve all forms of nature.

Cover photography by Maslowski Wildlife Productions

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# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESS

## Too Many Deer - A Point Of View

(continued from page 2)

Population control of deer is an emotional issue. Deer are beautiful creatures - large, brown-eyed, long-eared, warm and furry. Like all wild populations in formerly good range, deer have expanded their populations exponentially to fill all the spaces available for them. A doe in good health, eating enough green food through the winter, will bear at least two fawns each spring from her second year through her sixth or so. In three years, one deer may easily become nine. In good habitat, wildlife science suggests that a maximum deer herd might be 12 to 18 per square mile. That density assumes that the rate of births is offset by predation, whether by wolves or coyotes or bobcats or mountain lions (no longer available as options here) and by natural death due to accidents and disease (still operative, but much less so when there is abundant food available for deer and health is likely to be at its

peak for many years). With no predators or without hunting pressure, the population of deer continues to grow, destroying the land that supports them and thousands of other species of living things as well.

Well-meaning programs to live trap deer and move them elsewhere sound good on paper, but are doomed to failure. There is no longer "somewhere else" to move them. The populations are high everywhere and are still growing. To catch the deer in suburbs and move them to the country simply dumps problems on farmers. Wildlife are not checkers to be moved willy-nilly on a checker board of land.

Nature provided natural checks and balances on all populations. Through accident, disease and starvation, competition and predation, nature adjusted a delicate balance of interrelated populations over thousands of years. In less than two hundred years, we have gone from wilderness to largely tamed land, never to return to its former state. The genetic plasticity, the ability of certain species to adapt to change, has allowed them to

adjust their feeding and living habits to meet the change. The problem is that there is no predation to help deer limit their numbers to a level which the land can safely support. For all the time that life has appeared on the face of this majestic earth, there have been those checks and balances. Now they are gone. As humans who care for the deer, and who care for all the thousands of other species of plants and animals which once coexisted peacefully with the deer, we owe it to all living things to limit the growth of the deer herds. There was a time when predators held the populations in check. Now, by one means or another, we must replicate the job of the predators. Controlled hunting is one solution. It is not fair for us to favor one species because it is cute or cuddly or that they remind us of a cartoon world seen in our youth. As responsible citizens and reluctant stewards of a living world, it has befallen to us to manage wild things for the good of all others. We were charged once to be fruitful and multiply, and subdue the earth. We are also charged with the job of replenishing it. We must not forget our charge.

## A Local Perspective

By John Klein, Land Manager  
Hamilton County Park District

When I began my career at the Park District in 1975, it was unusual to see a white-tailed deer or even a Canada goose in the parks. I remember being excited to even find deer tracks. The grand honking from an occasional migrating flock of Canada geese brought an immediate halt to any activity as I watched in wonder of their long journey. Today, while I still enjoy seeing both deer and geese, it is rare to find a patch of wet soil

responsible for species such as Canada geese.

Both white-tailed deer and Canada geese are highly adaptable animals. While most animal populations suffer when confronted with rapid urbanization, these two species are actually doing too well. Numbers of both have been increasing at unprecedented rates locally during recent years due to their abilities to adapt to urban habitats and a complete lack of natural predators.

### White-tailed Deer

The white-tailed deer population presents a natural carrying capacity issue. Generally, nature balances populations through a combination of predation and limits on food or cover. In the Cincinnati area, the balance of nature has been tipped. Predatory animals such as wolves or cougars are gone. While the number of deer taken through hunting or by collisions with vehicles is rising dramatically, the overall population continues to grow. In our area, the deer have begun exceeding the natural carrying capacity of the land. As they eat most vegetation within their reach (approximately four feet from the ground) an obvious browse line develops. At several Park District parks, this browse line is beginning to appear. Woodlands once lush

with a wide variety of spring wildflowers and tree seedlings are being stripped of most vegetation, signs of too many deer. At Shawnee Lookout, much of the under story consists almost exclusively of the few woody plants species that deer dislike. The effects are not limited to plants alone, but to all other life that share the woods with the deer. The loss of plant diversity on the forest floor results in a loss of insect diversity, which results in a loss of small bird and mammal diversity, which results in a loss of larger predatory species such as hawks, owls and foxes. By their very success, deer have begun to damage the entire ecosystem.

At this point, the Hamilton County Park District staff is gathering information about the situation and other similar situations throughout the Midwest in an effort to best manage this challenge of success. During January of 1999, a helicopter deer census was conducted in 12 Hamilton County Park District parks. A heavy snowfall allowed most deer to be easily seen from the air. Numbers of deer recorded during the census are being used as baseline data for future surveys.

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Within three years, a female deer can produce eight or more offspring.

without a deer track or to spend a day in the parks without hearing the honking call of Canada geese. Both can be found nearly everywhere in Ohio thanks to the conservation efforts of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (O.D.N.R.) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. O.D.N.R. is charged with the management of all wildlife in Ohio. In addition, under federal migratory bird laws, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is also

Exploding Deer Population			
Perhaps the most telling statistics of the increasing deer population are the number of deer-vehicle accidents and the number of bucks and does taken by hunters.			
Deer-Vehicle Accidents In Hamilton County		Deer Harvests In Hamilton County	
1980	44	1980	47
1985	95	1985	168
1990	208	1990	466
1995	591	1995	1,279
1997	647	1997	1,253
Source: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife			

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# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: THE CHALLENGE OF SUCCESS

## A Local Perspective

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The Park District has contracted with an aerial infrared survey company to conduct a deer survey in 12 parks in 1999. This method promises to be a more accurate way to survey the population and should generate even more reliable numbers. The Park District plans to continue monitoring the deer population and carefully consider management options for the future preservation of all wildlife species. With a lack of natural predators and no hunting allowed in the parks, the Ohio Division of Wildlife estimates that a 60% increase in population growth annually is likely.

Deer Management is a highly emotional issue with few options available. Doing nothing will result in a continued increase in the population and increased destruction of habitat for all species. Eventually the health of the deer will suffer as well. Moving deer out of the area is not permitted by O.D.N.R. and past attempts in other locations have resulted in up to an 80% mortality rate. Birth control injections are not feasible at this time due to the need for multiple doses for these free ranging animals. Allen Rutberg, a senior scientist with the Humane Society of the United States, reports, "Unfortunately, the current state of technology for immunoconception with deer lags behind the expectations of the public, especially animal rights activists, who are quick to advocate its use as an alternative to lethal control."

Many land managers who are charged with managing park's natural areas for all species, now consider lethal control as being the only feasible option. A growing list of state and local park systems, nature centers, cities and villages throughout the Midwest are allowing hunting in one form or another each year. Twenty short years ago this issue would not have been considered. Now, out of necessity, it has to be.

O.D.N.R. recognizes the problems with high deer numbers in urban areas. Beginning in 1994, Ohio deer hunting regulations in urban zones such as Hamilton County were amended to allow each hunter to harvest up to six deer per season, five of which must be without antlers. This is a dramatic change from just a few short years ago when the limit was one deer per season. The plan is working but only in areas accessible to hunters.

While legal hunting has proven to be the most cost efficient form of deer management, a deer culling program using sharpshooters is sometimes required for safety reasons. A deer culling program is already underway at the Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks and Cleveland Metroparks. At both Park Districts trained sharpshooters work at night, when the parks are closed to the public. All harvested deer are processed at the park systems' expense and all meat is donated to the local food pantry to feed the hungry. From the winter of 1994-95, through the winter of 1997-98, a total of 44,794 pounds of venison has been donated to feed the hungry in Columbus alone. This program benefits both the ecosystem involved and the less fortunate in the community.

### Canada Geese

Canada geese numbers have also increased dramatically. Results of the Park District's Annual Winter Bird Count reveal that the resident population of geese has risen from only nine counted in 1972, to 1,606 counted in 1997. The ever increasing number of ponds on golf courses, condominium developments and industrial parks for both aesthetics and stormwater detention are supplying the Canada geese with acres and acres of preferred habitat. The geese which once moved through this area only to stop and rest at rivers and farm ponds, are now staying. The geese feel safe on a mowed lawn where they can watch for approach-

ing danger, have lush fertilized grass to feed on, and, when fountains or aeration devices are used, have access to open water year round.

As the numbers of Canada geese have exploded in urban areas, including local parks, the situation has developed into another challenge of success. Conflicts resulting from aggressive geese and large amounts of fecal material that the geese leave behind in high public use areas has forced the Park District to initiate a Canada geese management program.

Steps to reduce the resident duck and goose population have had marginal results. In years past, literally hundreds of geese have been moved from Winton Woods and Miami Whitewater Forest to Mercer Waterfowl Refuge near Celina, Ohio by O.D.N.R. The geese quickly returned however, and the program was discontinued.

A feeding discouragement policy was instituted in 1997 in conjunction with an educational program to alert the public that feeding of geese and other animals replaces natural food with unnatural, reduces the animals' healthy fear of humans and weakens the instinct to migrate. We are

happy to report that the vast majority of the public has been following this new policy and as a result, artificial feeding of ducks and geese has been considerably reduced.

Unfortunately, additional management is needed to restore a more natural behavior to the geese in the parks. More aggressive efforts to encourage geese to move from public areas to natural areas of the parks have resulted in some success. One technique being used is the firing of shellcrackers, a pyrotechnic device that produces a

loud popping sound similar to a shotgun. The goal of using shellcrackers is to startle the geese into flying to natural areas of the parks. While this technique has shown some promise, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources recommends that hunting be permitted on the golf course at select locations



Bill Leaman

*Too many Canada geese populated together at busy Harbor areas can lead to disease among the flock.*

during the legal season. This in turn would leave an impression on the geese, making future use of shellcrackers more effective.

Hunting has never been permitted in the Hamilton County Park District. In an effort to exhaust all possible nonlethal control options, Park District Rangers will "shoot" geese decoys in an effort to further simulate hunting, thereby making the shellcrackers more effective. Park District staff hope that these nonlethal control methods will be effective at keeping Canada geese numbers at a manageable level in high public use areas so that future lethal control options will not be necessary.

Both deer and Canada geese have become a major test to all those concerned with managing parkland as a healthy ecosystem. In our efforts to provide "space for all species" the Board and staff of the Hamilton County Park District will continue to research and develop our management of this challenge of success.

### For More Information

Attend the "Urban Deer" program at Winton Woods on Monday, May 10. You can learn about the life history and habits of Ohio's largest mammal. Presenters will include Joe Boggs from the Ohio State University Extension Service, as well as Park District Naturalist and Land Management staff members. Meet in the Winton Centre Auditorium at 7 p.m.

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